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Resurrection

By K. K. FOSTER

It is not when the white thunder of the winter is
screaming
And the blue pools are held in the grip of the giant
hills
And the trees are a mystery after the old wisdom of
blossoming
— It is not then I am bent in the steel strong vise of
my sorrow.

When the wet, naked winds, crying, run up the hill
from the river,
And the lithe trees whisper beautiful words to each
other
And under the ground the exquisite, long soundless
dead are awakening, —
I am covered and choked with the ash grey dust of
my sorrow.

Three Poems

By OSCAR WILLIAMS

FAILURE

Whenever sundown colors go
To where all sundowns have retreated,
I wonder what of me has died,
How much of me has been defeated.

Though winds are dumb and shadows gather,
Though nothing, nothing in me cries,
Yet strangely I become aware of
The tears within the twilight's eyes. . . .

SNOW NOCTURNE

Black branches against a freezing night
Silverly blue and strangely fair;
Silently blowing in the starlight —
God's tossed hair.

Fields white with snowlight curving the sky;
Silent, upturned, gazing on space,
Brushed by the silver wind of the aeons —
God's dead face.

THERE IS A SACRED WONDER

There is a sacred wonder on the earth
Unknown to happy birds and golden days,
That lingers like a sad delirium
And cries in hidden ways.

It beats forever 'neath the froth of things,
And never sunlit loveliness will wane,
But like some shadow agony it roams
With streaming hair of rain.

Over the earth the sacred wonder roams
Robed in a grayness woven of the sea,
And like a sadness in a woman's eyes,
It haunts eternally.

It wears the lonely twilight for a cloak,
And often hides its eyes, as sorrow must,
And where its drapery swishes by
The darkness drifts like dust.

It mourns over wet glistening roofs like wind,
Then summons silence from her far hushed place,
And I, who dream beside my shadowed pane,
Have seen a still gray face. . . .

Two Poems

By KENNETH SLADE ALLING

ECSTASY

I could never be properly dead,
For even alone in my grave,
These songs would go on in my head,
And May in my veins would rave.

No grief or sorrow or pain
Could bind me utterly down;
I should go shout with the rain,
And burst, with June, through the town.

No ancient hurt of the stars,
That scarred my heart at its birth,
Could ever make silent in me,
The songs that I sing for the earth.

GOD

Almighty, kind and terrible Father,
These little songs I sing,
For earth or some other lady,
Are unmeet for a King.

God, let a worshipping singer
Sing once a song for Thee;
Made with the beauty of petals,
And the thunder of the sea.

Brief Possessions

By OLIVE LINDSEY

We had a grievance against our landlord — a just grievance. "We" were three households, all feminine, all confirmed apartment-householders for the usual reasons which determine this unsatisfactory way of living, and all, in the beginning at least, as willing as most tenants to think and speak well of "the party of the first part" of our contract.

But our provocations to the very opposite state of mind were so manifest as to overcome even the aloofness of women who have little in common but a roof. As redress for our wrongs came to require discussion and united effort, had our landlord been capable of alarm, he would have been overwhelmed by the singleness of our attack. We became genuine neighbors.

Prefatory to the confession I have to make, I wish no doubts to exist that I suffered just as much as my companions or that I had my full vocal share in our attempts to gain justice. My vocal exertions were not even directed wholly toward the immediate ends of justice. They took most circuitous routes, publishing the state of affairs to all who were inclined to lend an ear. I shouldn't have imagined I could find so much to say regarding a situation which presented so few varieties, independently of the weather.

In September, which was cold and damp, I said to myself that perhaps this fall a surprise was in store for me, perhaps I was going to be warm. Hadn't the landlord said with peculiar satisfaction that his house was always warm; that he attended to the furnace himself; that I had no irresponsible janitor to deal with? My expectation survived many days of damp and cold. But finally it flickered out, and I lit my own gas-log in my own fireplace. October was pleasant, but in the cool mornings and evenings I continued to light my own gas. November was not pleasant, still I found myself extravagantly burning gas.

By this time I had discovered that my neighbors were having exactly the same experience and reactions. Four women never became agreed upon one thing with less argument than did we in condemning capitalism, as represented by the graceless person who took our rental for heat and service and gave us in return scarcely more than a roof over our heads. To be sure, he didn't look at all like a capitalist. He might much more easily have been taken for a Bolshevik — he was shabby enough, only much too mild and evasive in manner, and he had no discernible theories. Neither were we Bolsheviks, nor Shylocks.

But our discontent with our landlord became a flaming brand. His sins of omission belonging not only to his delinquency as landlord, but also as janitor, he represented a centering of responsibility which in theory had been attractive but in practice

proved to be a concentration of obstinacy, greed, cruelty, and other dark traits.

We did not nurse our wrath in silence toward the object of it. No, indeed! We reproached him to his face, separately and unitedly, the only effect of which was his avoidance of such interviews.

Then March came. A few seductive days drew our attention from indoor irritations to outdoor expectations. We were to have equal shares in the garden. In September, this had meant salad vegetables fresh from one's own garden plot, and the inestimable boon, to such as we, of watching berries, pears, and grapes ripen until we should choose the day for them to grace our tables, importuning our guests to say how good they were, — because we had watched over their delectable destinies! I'm sure none of us had been led to expect great quantities of these fruits of an old garden, once some one's care and joy, now for anyone's careless taking; but even one pear, one cherry, one grape growing just outside one's own kitchenette door cast a glamor which made its value inestimable.

In March we surveyed this domain with disillusioned eyes. We said the cherries would be wormy; the pears blighted by the sickness of the tree, which we noticed then for the first time — scale, or whatever it was; the grapes — there would be no grapes; who ever knew grapes to come from a vine allowed to revert to type in such fashion?

I suppose my neighbors thought regretfully of what they would do if that garden belonged to them.

I know the glamor came back to me when I saw it briefly as my own. A little pruning and the pear tree's sickness need not be fatal. A little spraying and luscious, sweet, black cherries would be the reward. A little support and the grape-vine which sprawled upon the ground might take its rightful place in the world.

Rose bushes, lilac trees, syringa — all called upon me in the name of my grandmother's New England garden to care for them. Red sprouts of rhubarb appeared, and small prickings of green showing tulip and narcissus bulbs in unexpected places. Plainly we were heirs for a season to a garden not planned for the like of us.

If anything lacked, after an acquaintance lasting from September till February, to make us utterly pessimistic concerning our landlord, it was revealed in March. The highwayman who had robbed us not only of our comfort, but temporarily at least of our Christian charity, to say nothing of the time spent in talking and thinking of our annoyance, was a thoroughly bad citizen. The outdoor evidence was not to be gainsaid.

Where grass ought to have been, it grew only in ragged patches or not at all; where it ought not to have been, the previous year's growth was luxuriant enough to hide mines of rubbish. Everywhere were the bleached bones of rounds and joints of beef and skeletons of fowls which had been dragged from garbage cans to serve over and over again as *pièces de résistance* of many a lonely banquet for the neigh-

borhood cats and dogs. It was the bleaching of more than one season that these remnants of past revelries represented. Broken china and glass and tin cans also were reminiscent fragments.

It was certainly not our business to do the outdoor spring cleaning. Our predecessors undoubtedly had acted upon the same principle. Clearly it had not been done for many a spring, and would not be done in our time. But we were all good housekeepers to the degree that such surroundings could not be endured. We bought a rake, together. Remembering the recreant landlord, each claimed she took her turn with the rake under protest. I more than surmised that this was lip service to apartment-house tradition. Rake in hand, I for one never thought of the landlord; but I was careful not to allow the others to know I accused them of such heresy. All that rake could do was soon done. We considered the results with mutual satisfaction, exclusive of the landlord.

More, we said, we would not do. We were going to move. We might go any minute. We were severally as hopeful of finding the apartment of our dreams as any tenant who has suffered even the customary disillusionments. The more nightmares we awakened from, the more dreams we encouraged.

At the back of the lot stood a high board fence. It was the kind of fence which could not justify itself. Some of its members had fallen to the ground and lay where they had fallen. Others were prevented from falling only by a single nail. No good reason

appeared to us for having a fence at all. But since it was there, why not have it whole when a few blows of a hammer would make it so? The fence annoyed me particularly.

Suggestion, argument, or threat never had proved the means of overcoming our enemy's natural resistance. But the irritation caused me by that sign-board of neglect spurred me to just one more encounter. I planned a surprise attack and baited my victim with a respectful request for advice concerning early onions. He grew mildly interested. He knew all about onions, and having told me when and how to plant those desirable vegetables, he was moved to exploit the inheritance into which I had come.

He pointed out the abundant rhubarb with a generous air. He spoke even more generously of the currants, so that I suspected he, Cain-like, was covertly offering me vegetables in lieu of the burnt offering he had failed to sacrifice, thinking I might be deluded again into taking his word and his bond. He had the manner of a true benefactor of humanity when he spoke of the roses; but he grew cautious when I suggested spraying, and seemed to recall urgent business elsewhere.

If anything was to be gained, plainly I must angle more warily. I asked him what were the plants coming up just inside the fence. He didn't remember the name. They grew to be taller than himself, came up every year, and had blue flowers.

"Larkspur!" Of course, I knew it.

The name had magical qualities. The long line of green from side to side showed what a wealth there would be of that aspiring, ethereal loveliness. Already its presence filled the place for me. I saw its blue shimmering into uncertain purple against the faint mauve and gray of weathered boards.

From that moment my character as an apartment-house dweller was changed.

My landlord admitted tentatively that it might be larkspur. His manner indicated that if it meant a cheap way of satisfying a fault-finding tenant, he could descant of the virtues of larkspur; if it enjoined spraying or something equally unreasonable, he was quite as ready to recant.

At that moment also the landlord who must be cajoled became a creature to be commanded. A name meant nothing to him, and by that token his articles of abdication were signed. By royal right of discovery I took possession.

The fence must be made fit. No longer hampered by indirection, I demanded a hammer and nails. The miserable man, not realizing at once what had happened, again admitted only tentatively that he had a hammer and nails. I looked him firmly in the eye. Could he find them then? He said he'd see. I followed him to see also. He found them.

I expected him promptly to disappear when he had assured himself that I meant no harm to his premises. His curiosity and his instinct of self-protection against giving more of anything than could be avoided must have had a struggle worth recording in the history of his relations with the current of

tenantry which came his way. But curiosity won. Or perhaps fundamentally he had the nature of the moth toward the flame of authority. At any rate, he offered to put the fallen boards into place for me. I, as the new proprietor, allowed him to do so.

The fence whole, or nearly so, his countenance beamed with the unwonted pleasure of a good deed done at a cheap price; though the candle-power of the illumination might have been higher, I guessed, had he been able to shed his old traits as readily as I had lost mine. How undimmed the radiance might have been had he foreseen how blessedly let alone he was to be! How complete his satisfaction in both rôles!

Then and there I abandoned my rights as a tenant to the April winds. The duties which belonged to the party of the first part I recklessly assumed. But I did not flaunt my treason in the faces of my neighbors. The situation was too subtle to be explained by the truth. My actions, I felt, needed the support of a motive consistent with my status as a bird of passage of the apartment-house species. I said shamelessly that my physician had ordered me to work in a garden. I avowed that if I knew of any other garden where I might regain health, I would work in that. I risked the solicitude of my kindly neighbors. Later, as they watched my efforts to grow even more robust than I appeared, I suspected that I risked their emulation.

My physician's fabricated advice, however, did not warrant investments in fertilizer and spraying solution. And I soon found that I had set out upon

an adventure the incidental demands of which I had not reckoned with. As I ministered to the larkspur, I saw it more glorious than the poor soil in which it grew could make it. I bought fertilizer therefore. I procured exact knowledge of pruning, and as I pruned the lilacs and grape-vine and rose bushes, I could not avoid the implication of spraying solution. I purchased that also and the necessary means of using it.

But I spread fertilizer without ostentation and sprayed surreptitiously. I shrink from divulging that I bought grass seed; but it is so. All of us had thoroughly raked the grass plot. In my zeal to recapture a hypothetically lost vigor, I raked it over again, stirring the earth cautiously as I did so and guardedly dropping the seed.

Beyond such politic tributes to the conventions, my relations with my garden were undisturbed. I forgot I was merely a bird of passage. The early morning hours (unbelievably early hours), when I found it most convenient to do my gardening, since the others were not about, were as redolent of my natural inheritance of the earth as if I had been the actual landlord.

Having confessed, I'd like those whilom neighbors of mine to read the advertisement of my weaknesses, especially what is forthcoming.

Would I have had this disclosure to make had I been assured that to-day, the 29th day of June, I should be looking down from my seventh story window into the perfectly planned and as perfectly cared for court of a model city apartment some hundreds

of miles from the scene of my obvious wrongs and inexplicable pleasures?

Probably not.

Have I any regrets when I picture my late faithless landlord blandly offering rhubarb and currants—indeed, the whole premises improved by my misguided philanthropy, even my larkspur—to guileless ones following the unending trail of apartment-householders? Not offering them in their true nature, but covertly misrepresenting them as steam.

Yes, I have!

And my typewriter claims no device capable of expressing the violence with which I set that down. I wish I knew how to give the currants and the rhubarb and the roses articulate voices, all murmuring in the ears of prospective tenants,

“Beware!

Believe him not.

His words are fair—

But beware!

When blow the blasts

Of wintry air,

You will be cold,

Cold. Have care!

Beware!”

What triumph is in my neighbors' smiles at this! For a little personal gratification I would break the law which preserves the species, would I?

That is indeed something to think about. Again I look into this perfect courtyard of my model apartment-house, as I have for nine days now, and I am

homesick for hoe and rake, for the endearingness of young leaves, for a vision of blue, deepening to purple against silvery gray, whose roots I could feed and give to drink.

Yes I would, again.

Only it would be a pity if no one came to the garden who would take my larkspur for itself.

Two Poems

By LEYLAND HUCKFIELD

LAST LOAD HOME

Through the darkening hawthorn lanes
Come the rolling, groaning wains
With heavy horses plodding on —
Like steeds that tread the paths of Doom —
“Last load home — Last load home —”
Hay and maids and meadow bloom,
And brown-faced men that tramp along
To a rare old pagan song
That thunders through the falling gloam.

Slowly comes the summer moon
And peers into the scented shadows,
Into sweet and ancient meadows
Where the ghostly mists arise,
Till up and down the Roman road
The silver tangle shifts and quivers
Like the light of magic rivers
Flowing through a haunted land :

It creeps upon the swaying load
And on and ever on it follows
Over hills and through deep hollows
Where the song is like old bells
Echoing in deserted shrines,
And ringing down forgotten wells
Where the moonlight never shines.

The harness jingles measuredly,
The whiffle-trees and wheels complain,
And close behind with pikes on shoulder
Trudge the sturdy country men ;
Once the moon is dimmed and then
Through half a mile of blackened shade
We pass into a time far older —
Hearing half-familiar things —

The crash of hoofs; the clang of steel
Beating on an armored knee,
And woven chain that chinks and rings
A grim barbaric melody,
And, back behind where pikemen tread,

A steady chant of drunken song
That mocks the flesh of distant dead:

But down the hill towards the mill
To music of a silver weir
The load rolls on, the song roars on,
And cottage windows are aglow,
And through the gloom the thatched roofs loom
In a shaggy Saxon row
Beneath the church tower's Norman frown;

And in towards the ricks we go,
Swaying down the rutted road,
Moonlight all about the farm,
Moonlight on the spreading elms
And fairying the lurching load —
And through the chorus, beating slow,
"Last load home — Last load home —"
A rhythmic murmur seems to flow
Like music of the enchanted loam
That shook with battle long ago.

OIL OF MAN

(ENGLISH FOLK-LORE)

Steal the skull of a murdered man
Before the magical juice of his brain be dead;
And do it in windy dark of a summer morn
With no stars overhead;
For if light do shine on the grisly thing

You hug in the crook of your sleeve
Under your arm it shall gibber and dring
And moan and bitterly grieve:
And if you will not heed its cries
But still, and still, go on,
It shall set its pale teeth over your heart
And suck till you be done.

But if no light do shine upon it
Before you reach your room,
Then that thing shall be sodden and silent
And you shall mold its doom.

You shall bolt your doors and shutter your windows
Till all be tomby still,
And take a dried root of monkshood
And sprigs of rue and gill;
And burn them on a smouldering fire
To thwart the thing's illwill.

You shall set the skull in an oaken clamp
That was beam of a gallow's tree;
You shall take an auger and slowly bore
Until you come to the moldy, damp
Thick-clotted mystery.

You shall scoop it out with a weasel's leg —
That was trapped on graveyard soil —
Then you shall crouch by the low red fire
And chuckle to hear it boil;
And if you stir it more than thrice
You never shall get the oil.

Three dark hours it shall simmer and bubble
And you shall three times name the dead;
You shall three times name your trouble
With hands upon the grisly head;
Then you shall take the cauldron off
And drain the dreadful stew —
Three times three through a silver sieve
Pass that frightful brew;
Then, as it cools, a glimmering glow
Shall light the silver pan,
And you will stare, and shiver, and mow
At sight of Oil of Man.

The Web on the Altar

By BENNETT WEAVER

Out from the low stone tower came the mellow voice of the bell. The ivy leaves flattened like silver and lay stark on the grey stones as the voice went through them. Doves, feeling the grey vibrations on their pink feet, curved their wings in the old merlons of the tower, and gleamed like spirits through the pines that kept a surge-low whispering above the graves round about. Far off in the valley the farmer paused among his herd, and let the white salt run through his fingers and fall on the green thistle heads. The bell of St. Alban. Along the lanes and roads people were driving. In the village that clustered beneath the tower, mothers were tying green and pink and gold ribbons on the bright hair of their little daughters, fathers were blackening the muddy shoes of their little sons.

As she stood before her dresser, Ellen heard the bell calling. For seventy years it had rung in a little host to the services of the church, it had tolled generations to sleep in God's acre. She tucked a wisp of grey hair beneath her hat, drew on her black gloves, pulled her dark veil over her face. Then she stood looking vacantly at herself, listening: the bell of her faith, the bell of her high happiness, the bell of her deep, deep sorrow. It came into the cold silence about her, into her silent house, her house silent of his voice, her house where that other little

voice had never cut the silence with its red cry,—it came in about her, beating at her cold temples as she looked at herself blankly. To herself she was a scarce-accosting stranger. Her heart felt like snow drifting about in her bosom, very light, very cold, very, very painless.

She turned, went out through the hall, out into the morning sunshine of Spring. Phlox, mignonette, early holly-hock,—these were to the right and left of her as she went down the stone steps. From either side of the walk, bunched violets lifted their fragrance about her. Marigolds gleamed. He had loved flowers. He had loved these flowers. But she did not look, and — when one breathes in a certain way, one is senseless to odor. She was going to morning worship, just as she had always gone, and had gone with him.

She numbly remembered that she had been denying something in her soul. She had been denying that her life was wounded wild. She had been denying that the ministrations of the church brought her comfort no longer. She had been denying that the priest did not value either her sorrow or her faithfulness. She remembered that she had been denying — she knew not what — God? Suddenly she did not wish to deny any longer. To deny was to fight for life, and what was life?

She opened the gate and turned to the right down the main street of the little town. Across the way were the store and post office. The Breeds and the Bucks came out of their houses, man and wife out of either house, and children. They were laughing.

When the children saw her, they stopped laughing, held their prayer books more tightly, looked at each other.

Ellen turned toward the church at the next corner. The church was set at the northern end of the grave yard. The graves pushed up beneath the eaves of the place. They seemed to shudder close to the great walls. They were little frightened things. They were like young girls with secrets in their hearts. There were so many of them, and they all crowded about the church as if they would hide it from her. To get to the church she had to walk the length of the yard, beneath a great row of maples which showered their pink bells upon her as she went. Ellen began to feel that the church was an immense distance away from her, that she could never mount to its doorway over all those graves.

She began to read over names familiar to her as her blood. James Richards, the founder of the church, and his wife, Elizabeth. William Richards, Richard Richards, Thomas Richards, and to match them, Mary and Rachel and Jane. Robert Howard and Lucy Howard here, Samuel Breed and Sarah Breed there. Here a low stone marked *Mother*, here one marked *Father*,—her mother and father. The bell began to clatter among the pines. What was this church that had gathered so much death about itself! Ellen felt her pulses cold in her wrists and along her throat. She had never felt so before.

A name, cut in a simple granite block—Ernest Russell. Beside it, a little stone—Alice: her husband, her baby! Her life struck over her like a wave. She had married at forty-three. In a year—

the three short strokes of the bell announced the hour of ten-thirty. Organ music came through the stained windows. He had loved the church, he and his fathers had loved the church. The snow kept on sifting through her bosom, piling itself in cold banks about her heart. She felt herself leaning toward the church, and walking in that direction in order to keep from falling. She could see only a little urn with violets in it, violets withering against the pale green and yellow of the grave, she could see only this as she stumbled through the church door and down the dark aisle toward *their* seat.

"The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him," somebody chanted somewhere far away. She knelt in her pew and bowed her head and clasped her cold brows in her hands.

They were singing: "Here would I touch and handle things unseen — and all my weariness —" Ellen rose and stood with the congregation. She felt the ice behind her eyes as she tried to read the words of the hymn. "My weariness —" what was weariness? "Things unseen —" they were within her, taking away her body, taking away her soul, leaving only her mind, leaving only a hard gleaming thing in her head. Through this thing twitches of scarlet ran; it was the choir singing. They sang with their heads back; their mouths were wide open. Their voices were hot. Salted chips of glass, such as you put into food to kill curs, — the high notes of the organ. And the minister in the chancel, intoning, and the people about her — some of the higher notes sent flashes back of her eyes. She was seeing sounds, garnet sounds. It was only, she told herself, that

the edges of the hymnal were tinted red. Then the people sang *amen*. She sat down with them.

The seats about her were nearly empty. The voices had sounded so because the church was empty. As the minister read the Declaration of Absolution, he again seemed very far away. She could not interpret his intonations; could God? All the Iosco students read the service that way now. They were not like the strong men who used to be in the church. Kemper and Adams, they had been up there in the chancel — men like the new North West that was. The Reverend Burleson and the Reverend Armstrong, they were men of the low church, and they were strong men. How she remembered — they were of Paul's breed. Now, far away, the up and down and slide of the nasal voice. The glory had departed out of Israel.

Venite, exultimus Domino — Te Deum laudamus — she was seated again. There was no *Benedicte*. Once more the chill emptiness of the place crowded against her. Of the Young family that had filled two seats across the aisle, not one was left. Of the Butlers — there were nine children — only a grey-haired old man, trembling and groping his way through his prayer book. Little Nettie Richards, who used to sit ahead of her, tossing her pretty black curls, — she was buried beside Puget Sound. James Boyle, who used to watch Nettie from the seat behind, — dead of the fever in Manila. An opaque greyness was closing in about her as she looked here and there. It seemed to Ellen that death extended from this place where she sat, extended like a toneless grey substance to the ends of the earth. It cov-

ered the walls. The rafters and great cross-beams hung with it. The seats were bulked with it. The light of the stained windows hung green and yellow strips and patches upon the greyness. From here to the ends of the earth —

“Lift up your hearts” — the tone from the chancel.

“We lift them up” — the response from the grey beings about her.

The *Coena Domini*. “Draw nigh and take” — Ellen shuddered. She saw the gold cup at the lips of her dying husband. She had taken that cup after him. — People were going past her. With their heads bowed they were going up the steps to the altar rail. These people who had lied and slandered, who had taken the death-sin to their hearts month after month, they were going up to the altar, and Ernest, a good man, a man good as gold, her husband, was dead. The urn of violets withering against the pale green and yellow of the grave floated in her vision. “Draw nigh and take” — the choir was repeating the communion chant. Ernest would want her to go. It was the last thing that they had done together. An awful emotion swept through her, scattering the snow in her breast. He was standing there in the aisle waiting for her. The candles gleamed on the altar, and the gold cross and the gold service dishes gleamed. She put out her hand. It fell through the dim air to the seat. He had not taken it; but she rose from where she knelt. She said to herself, “He willed it.” With her head bowed she went forward. Perhaps when she took the cup, the agony would break.

She kneeled at the altar rail and laid her right hand in her left with the palm up, to receive the bread. Her heart began to writhe with all the physical pain of a frozen member which is brought to sudden heat. She felt the nerves through her body draw and vibrate and shake her. They pulled at the back of her head. Her arms were two flames thrusting out from her. "Do this in remembrance" — the bread was lying in her hand. "Do this in remembrance" — yes, yes, in remembrance.

She tried to raise her hand to her lips. Blood seemed to be flowing from her eyes. Suddenly, in front of the stained window behind the altar, she saw a bright object swinging. It was swinging from the rafter above and coming down, down, down, down past the lamb in the arms of the Savior, down past the Savior's feet. It crawled down the golden cross and ran swiftly to an ebony book rack that stood near an elevation on the altar. Between the two it wove a filament out of itself, then another, another and another. The priest went on down the line of people, the spider wove. The web was growing black against the white altar cloth. He wove swiftly, he grew larger and larger. Colors stood out on him, spikes of color. Backward, forward — he grew scarlet and yellow — he burned. The minister turned to his altar, the spider sat in his web, great and brilliant. The minister stood before his altar, little and grey, playing with gold trinkets. The spider sat in his web, burning and brilliant. Ellen felt a great spasm of fear, of hypnotic fear, seize her. She would leap over the altar rail and take that burning, beautiful thing in her hands.

She rose and hastened out of the church against the eyes of the people. She held something in her hand. As she went slowly beneath the great maples, with the little pink bells dropping upon her, she opened her hand to see the burning spider, and saw the white flake of communion bread.

Unmindful

By CATHARINE CRANMER

Two strong oaks and an age-bent apple tree,
A few stones left from a chimney-place laid low
Still mark the place where his cabin stood when he
Helped move the frontier westward, a century ago.

Close by the grave that sinks lower every year
Pert motors hiss and locomotives thunder,
Thankless for paths his youth and faith made clear,
And powerless to charge his sleep with wonder!

In a Mail Order House

By RICHARD WARNER BORST

White envelopes, like foam upon the waves,
The morning mail pours in, a rushing flood.
I read a thousand wishes from afar:

'Way up in Michigan, John Spangler's wife
Must have a couple yards of calico;
"And send it quick," she says, "I need it bad."
Amelia Rogers, out in Arkansas,
Desires a foulard silk, "White, striped with green."
I think she'll wear it proudly to a dance,
And ride home in the moonlight with her beau.
From Oklahoma comes this grimy sheet;
It's such a scrawl I hardly make it out.
Oh, yes! Some small boy wants "a rifle, sure, —
A twenty-two," and sends the cash for it
In silver pieces sewn up in a cloth.

So flies the morning; and the world without
Makes its loud clamor o'er a thousand leagues
For everything that's bought or sold in all
The earth. I see the disseparate multitude,
Wide-eyed with wonder, a curious, hopeful throng,
Pleased with the strange and many-colored things
That stream in myriad parcels from the gates
Of this vast store. The gulfs of distance close,
And in bright dreams these far-flung wanderers
move
Through lucent thoroughfares of shining towns.

The Infant Love

By LLOYD FRANK MERRELL

My eyes ran dry over young sorrows. . . .
And now
When the grey-haired griefs of earth
Dig their nails in my heart,
I can but moan with the winds,
And pound out my pain on the wild rocks with the
 sea.
My soul
Long blessed with the friendship of flowers,
Now shuns them. . . .
Their perfume is the hot breath of a pale feverish
 child that wails in the summer rain and the
 dawn-songs of birds. . . .
Whither shall I turn and not wade in rivers of blood?
Where shall I hide and not hear the moans of the
 dying?
The dawn flares up with flames of red and gold,
Mocking me —
Haunting me, —
Beauty gone mad
Portraying the infant Love lying in a manger wast-
 ing away with patient waiting. . . .
Waiting to be nursed to health and manhood.

Two Poems

By BERNARD RAYMUND

DRAMA

Life caught at the instant of change — A door
Flies open, wheels thunder, a light blotted out
By a woman's cry, and what was before
Now is not except for a choking breath,
A warm flood that trickles over the floor.
Life caught and held here, and this the scrawl,
The challenging hieroglyph you call
By an age-old name that means to you
Little more than the wind and rain.
This thing is hatched out of chaos, goes
Swarming to chaos. Loss here, or gain?
Anew the riddle is put and anew
No answer save silence and strangeness and pain.

THE TOWER

Here is the substance spread
Far on the frosted grass,
Sprawled fast asleep beneath the dead
Decaying dream that lifts its head
In siege against the sky:
Grim parapeted mockery,
Great hulk of pageantry.
— Here is the substance spread, and there
A phantom taper splutters out;
Cold, phantom feet go stumbling up
A dripping stair.

Editorial

On January 23, Agnes Mary Brownell died at her home in Concordia, Kansas. She was one of the most valued of THE MIDLAND's contributors. Miss Brownell's earliest writing was for children, and stories of hers appeared in *The Youth's Companion*. "Sanctuary" was the first of her stories for mature readers to find publication; it appeared in THE MIDLAND for October, 1918. Subsequently Miss Brownell's work was sought by numerous periodicals, but she continued to send to THE MIDLAND those stories which she regarded as her best (though she did no unworthy work): "The Quest", published in September, 1919; "The Cure", published in September, 1920; and "Doc Greer's Practice", which appeared in the month of her death. The themes of these stories, especially of "The Quest" and "Doc Greer's Practice", are essentially themes for novels rather than for short stories; yet Miss Brownell handled them within the limits of five or six thousand words in a way that is astonishingly satisfying. She knew just what to omit, what to give in detail; and she was exceedingly successful in the very difficult transitions involved in such work. She was an uncompromising realist, but the mellowness of her style made bearable the poignancy of certain incidents in her stories. Altogether she was a competent and resourceful artist, sure of her effect, sure of the way to gain it; and withal a generous and courageous woman, fine in heart as in mind. In her the middle west loses one of the best of its younger writers. THE MIDLAND loses a faithful and enthusiastic friend.

Contributors to this Issue

KATHLEEN KNOX FOSTER was born in Larne, County Antrim, Ireland. She came to Chicago in 1906 and is at present a teacher of English in Oak Park High School. She has published work in *The University of Chicago Magazine*, *The Touchstone*, *The Irish Monthly*, and other magazines.

OSCAR WILLIAMS and KENNETH SLADE ALLING were contributors, respectively, to the January and February issues of THE MIDLAND.

OLIVE LINDSEY was born in Tuscola County, Michigan, and is at present a private secretary at Ann Arbor. "Brief Possessions" is her first published work.

LEYLAND HUCKFIELD was born at Hillfurze, Worcester, England, and lived there until he was twenty-eight years of age. These facts explain the subject matter of the poems in the present issue of THE MIDLAND. Mr. Huckfield is at present occupied in horticultural pursuits at Rochester, Minnesota.

BENNETT WEAVER was born in Wisconsin. He is a teacher of English at the Michigan Agricultural College. He is the author of two volumes of verse, *The Musician*, and *The Garden of Seven Trees* (the latter still at press). He has contributed to several issues of THE MIDLAND.

CATHARINE CRANMER was born at Otterville, Missouri, and is now residing there, engaged in gardening and writing, after varied experience in journalistic and other work in St. Louis, Washington, D. C., and other cities. In 1920 she contributed to *Reedy's Mirror*, *Contemporary Verse*, and numerous other periodicals.

RICHARD WARNER BORST is a middle westerner, now teaching in Santa Rosa, California. He has contributed several poems to THE MIDLAND.

LLOYD FRANK MERRELL is a native of Illinois, and resides now at Highland Park. He attended Northwestern University. He has been farmer, opera singer, common laborer, teamster, foreman in a lumber yard, postman, and is at present a salesman. Most of his published work has appeared in religious periodicals.

BERNARD RAYMUND was born at Columbus, Ohio, and is at present teaching English in Ohio State University. He has contributed verse occasionally to THE MIDLAND and to other magazines.

